

Saint George

April 23



Paolo Uccello 1456-1460

George was born to a Christian family during the late third century. His father was from Cappadocia and served as an officer of the Roman army. His mother was from Lydda, Iudaea (now Lod, Israel). She returned to her native city as a widow along with her young son, where she provided him with an education.

The youth followed his father's example by joining the army soon after coming of age. He proved to be a good soldier and consequently rose through the military ranks of the time. By his late twenties he had gained the title of *tribunus* (Tribune) and then *comes* (Count), at which time George was stationed in Nicomedia as a member of the personal guard attached to Roman Emperor Diocletian.

In 303 Diocletian issued an edict authorizing the systematic persecution of Christians across the Empire. The emperor Galerius was supposedly responsible for this decision and would continue the persecution during his own reign (305–311). George was ordered to participate in the persecution but instead confessed to being a Christian himself and criticized the imperial decision. An enraged Diocletian ordered his torture and execution.

After various tortures, including laceration on a wheel of swords, George was executed by decapitation before Nicomedia's city wall, on April 23, 303. A witness of his suffering convinced Empress Alexandra and Athanasius, a pagan priest, to become Christians as well, and so they joined George in martyrdom. His body was returned to Lydda for burial, where Christians soon came to honour him as a martyr.

He is also the patron saint of scouts.

England

Traces of the cult of St George predate the Norman Conquest, in ninth-century liturgy used at Durham Cathedral, in a tenth-century Anglo-Saxon martyrology, and in dedications to Saint George at Fordingham, Dorset, at Thetford, Southwark and Doncaster. He received further impetus when the crusaders returned from the Holy Land in the 12th century. King Edward III of England (reigned 1327 – 1377) was known for promoting the codes of knighthood and in 1348 founded the Order of the Garter. During his reign, George came to be recognised as the patron saint of the English monarchy; prior to this, Saint Edmund had been considered the patron saint of England, although his veneration had waned since the time of the Norman conquest, and his cult was partly eclipsed by that of Edward the Confessor. Edward dedicated the chapel at Windsor Castle to the soldier saint who represented the knightly values of chivalry which he so much admired, and the Garter ceremony takes place there every year. In the 16th Century, William Shakespeare firmly placed St George within the national conscience in his play *Henry V* in which the English troops are rallied with the cry “God for Harry, England and St George,” and Edmund Spenser included St. George (Redcross Knight) as a central figure in his epic poem *The Faerie Queen*.

In 1963, in the Roman Catholic Church, St George was demoted to a third class minor saint and removed him from the Universal Calendar, with the proviso that he could be honoured in local calendars. Pope John Paul II, in 2000, restored St George to the Calendar, and he appears in Missals as the English Patron Saint.

With the revival of Scottish and Welsh nationalism, there has been renewed interest within England in St George, whose memory had been in abeyance for many years. This is most evident in the St George's flags which now have replaced Union Flags in stadiums where English sports teams compete. Nevertheless, St George's Day still remains a relatively low-key affair with the City of London not publicly celebrating the patron saint. However, the City of Salisbury does hold an annual St George's Day pageant, the origins of which are believed to go back to the thirteenth century.



A 2006 gold proof half sovereign by the Royal Mint (UK) depicting St George killing the dragon



St George's cross –the flag of England

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Hymn: tune, Winchester New

- 1. Red cross upon a field of white,
the banner of a faithful knight:
Saint George's blood red cross we bear;
and by this cross our faith we swear.**
- 2. To set a faithless people free
that Christ might be their victory
this valiant servant of God's realm
the ancient dragon overwhelmed.**
- 3. This gallant martyr for his Lord
declared his faith before the sword
and rising took his cross of red,
emblazoned with the blood he shed.**
- 4. As did St. George, so let us slay
the ancient dragon in our day.
For justice let us take our stand
and so fulfill the great command.**
- 5. To God Almighty with Saint George,
we pledge that we shall ever forge
a bond of holy unity
that binds us to the Trinity.**

Text by Harry Hagan, OSB.
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Acclamation.

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.

The Greeting.

Christ is risen. Alleluia.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Scripture Sentence

Jesus said,
'Those who want to save their life will lose it,
and those who lose their life for my sake,
and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.'

Mark 8.35

Prayer of Preparation may be said.

Let us pray.

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleans the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Confession

The saints were faithful unto death and now dwell in the heavenly kingdom for ever.

As we celebrate their joy, let us bring to the Lord our sins and weaknesses, and ask for his mercy.

We are often slow to follow the example of Christ.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

We often fail to be known as Christ's disciples.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

We often fail to walk the way of the cross.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

The Absolution. Standing, the priest says

May God our Father forgive you your sins,
and bring you to the fellowship of his table
with his saints for ever. **Amen.**

The Hymn of Praise, Gloria in excelsis.

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Collect of the Day

Let us pray.

God of hosts,
who so kindled the flame of love
in the heart of your servant George
that he bore witness to the risen Lord
by his life and by his death:
give us the same faith and power of love
that we who rejoice in his triumphs
may come to share with him the fullness of the resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

A Reading from the Revelation to John [12. 7-12]

And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming,
‘Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah,

for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down,
who accuses them day and night before our God.
But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony,
for they did not cling to life even in the face of death.
Rejoice then, you heavens and those who dwell in them!
But woe to the earth and the sea,
for the devil has come down to you with great wrath,
because he knows that his time is short!

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Psalm 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.

**Then was our mouth filled with laughter
and our tongue with songs of joy.**

Then said they among the nations,
'The Lord has done great things for them.'

**The Lord has indeed done great things for us,
and therefore we rejoiced.**

Restore again our fortunes, O Lord,
as the river beds of the desert.

**Those who sow in tears
shall reap with songs of joy.**

Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed,

**will come back with shouts of joy,
bearing their sheaves with them.**

A Reading from the Second Letter of Paul to Timothy [2. 3-13]

Share in suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.
No one serving in the army gets entangled in everyday affairs;
the soldier's aim is to please the enlisting officer.
And in the case of an athlete, no one is crowned without
competing according to the rules.

It is the farmer who does the work who ought to have the first share of the crops.

Think over what I say,
for the Lord will give you understanding in all things.

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel, for which I suffer hardship, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. The saying is sure:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;
if we endure, we will also reign with him;
if we deny him, he will also deny us;
if we are faithless, he remains faithful—
for he cannot deny himself.

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Hymn, TiS 221. tune, Moscow

- 1. Glory to God on high!
Let heaven and earth reply,
‘Praise, praise his name!’
Angels his love adore
who all our sorrows bore,
and saints cry evermore,
‘Worthy the Lamb!’**
- 2. All those around the throne
cheerfully join in one,
praising his name;
we, who have felt his blood
sealing our peace with God,
sound his dear fame abroad,
‘Worthy the Lamb!’**
- 3. Join, all the ransomed race,
our Lord and God to bless:
praise, praise his name;
in him we will rejoice,
making a cheerful noise,
shouting with heart and voice,
‘Worthy the Lamb!’**

- 4. Though we must change our place,
yet we shall never cease
praising his name;
to him we'll tribute bring,
hail him our gracious King,
and without ceasing sing,
'Worthy the Lamb!'**

James Allen 1734–1804 alt.
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The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John
chapter 15, verses 18-21

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

'If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, "Servants are not greater than their master." If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me.

For the Gospel of the Lord,
praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sermon

Silence may follow.

The Nicene Creed

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church:

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,

who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The minister says

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

We pray for all nations, institutions and communities under the patronage of George.

We pray for our Diocese, Clarence our Bishop, Michelle and family, and today we especially remember the people of St George's Numurkah.

Lord hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Your servant George is a sign for us of the beauty of those who slay dragons, follow the quest for a world of justice and peace; who live nobly and are unafraid.

The white-robed army of martyrs praise you:

**throughout the world
the holy church acclaims you.**

We pray that we may find our quest in life,
that young people may dream dreams and see visions,
that none may be bound by unemployment
or lack of opportunity.

The white-robed army of martyrs praise you:

**throughout the world
the holy church acclaims you.**

We pray that all humanity may live with nobility and dignity,
that all will be freed from those things that diminish your image
in us, the misuse of bodies or minds.

The white-robed army of martyrs praise you:

**throughout the world
the holy church acclaims you.**

We pray that we may always travel the journey in our souls
that brings us closer to you;

that we may grow in holiness and love,
forsaking what is familiar and safe
and waging the battle against selfishness.

The white-robed army of martyrs praise you:

**throughout the world
the holy church acclaims you.**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who taught us to pray,

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

THE GREETING OF PEACE

Please stand

Once we were far off, but now in union with Christ Jesus we have been brought near through the shedding of Christ's blood, for he is our peace.

Ephesians 2.13

The peace of the Lord be always with you. Alleluia!
And also with you. Alleluia!

Hymn: TiS 470. tune, Paderborn

- 1. Rejoice in God's saints, today and all days:
a world without saints forgets how to praise.
Their faith in acquiring the habit of prayer,
their depth of adoring, Lord, help us to share.**
- 2. Some march with events to turn them God's way;
some need to withdraw, the better to pray;
some carry the gospel through fire and through flood:
our world is their parish; their purpose is God.**
- 3. Rejoice in those saints, unpraised and unknown,
who bear someone's cross, or shoulder their own;
they shame our complaining, our comforts, our cares:
what patience in caring, what courage, is theirs!**
- 4. Rejoice in God's saints, today and all days:
a world without saints forgets how to praise.
In loving, in living, they prove it is true:
their way of self-giving, Lord, leads us to you.**

Frederick Pratt Green 1903–2000
Words by permission Stainer & Bell, London

The gifts of the people are brought to the Lord's Table. They may be presented in silence or a suitable prayer, such as follows, may be used.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and good, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
and to praise the wonder of your work
revealed in the lives of George and all your holy martyrs.

Before the foundation of the universe you chose them in Christ
as your witnesses, to glorify your name and reveal before the
world the light of your truth.

By the Holy Spirit you gave them great courage
so that in the very weakness of this mortal body
they might conquer death and overcome its power.

And so we join with them and all the powers of heaven
to glorify your holy name in this their joyful hymn of praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Hear us, merciful Lord;
through Christ accept our sacrifice of praise;
and, by the power of your Word and Holy Spirit,
sanctify this bread and wine,
that we who share in this holy sacrament
may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

Who, when his hour had come,
on the night before he went up to the cross
to make full atonement for the sins of the whole world,
offering once for all his one sacrifice of himself,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.'

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying,
'Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant
which is shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.'

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:

**Dying, you destroyed our death.
Rising, you restored our life.
Christ Jesus, come in glory.**

Therefore, in obedience to his command,
we commemorate and celebrate his saving passion and death,
his mighty resurrection and ascension into heaven
and we eagerly await his coming again in glory.

We thank you that by your grace alone
you have accepted us in Christ;
and here we offer you a spiritual sacrifice,
holy and acceptable in your sight.

Through Christ, receive this our duty and service,
and grant that we who eat and drink these holy gifts
may, by your Holy Spirit, be one body in Christ,
and serve you in unity and peace.

In your grace and mercy,
bring us to the joy of your eternal kingdom
with all the company of the redeemed.
May we praise you in union with them,
and give you glory through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Through him, with him, in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour is yours, gracious Father,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The priest breaks the bread.

As this broken bread was once many grains,
which have been gathered together and made one bread:
**so may your Church be gathered
from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

**Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.**

Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sins of the world.
Happy are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

The priest and other communicants receive the Holy Communion.

*The disciples knew the Lord Jesus
in the breaking of the bread.*

The bread which we break, Alleluia,
Is the communion of the Body of Christ. *Refrain*

One body are we, Alleluia,
For though many we share one bread. *Refrain*

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

God, who gave us this holy meal
in which we have celebrated the glory of the cross
and the victory of your martyr George:
by our communion with Christ
in his saving death and resurrection,
give us with all your saints the courage to conquer evil
and so to share the fruit of the tree of life;

**Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

Notices

Hymn: Onward Christian soldiers

1. **Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
with the cross of Jesus going on before.
Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe;
forward into battle see his banners go!**
*Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
with the cross of Jesus going on before.*
2. **At the sign of triumph Satan's host doth flee;
on then, Christian soldiers, on to victory!
Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise;
brothers, lift your voices, loud your anthems raise.**
Onward, Christian soldiers
3. **Like a mighty army moves the church of God;
brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod.
We are not divided, all one body we,
one in hope and doctrine, one in charity.**
Onward, Christian soldiers
4. **Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise and wane,
but the church of Jesus constant will remain.
Gates of hell can never 'gainst that church prevail;
we have Christ's own promise, and that cannot fail.**
Onward, Christian soldiers
5. **Onward then, ye people, join our happy throng,
blend with ours your voices in the triumph song.
Glory, laud, and honour unto Christ the King,
this through countless ages men and angels sing.**
Onward, Christian soldiers

Sabine Baring-Gould 1832-1924 (1865)

The Blessing

God give you grace to follow his saints
in faith and love and steadfastness
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia!
In the name of Christ. Alleluia! Alleluia!



Raffael Sanzio - San Georges

In Christian hagiography **Saint George** (ca. 275-281 – April 23, 303) was a soldier of the Roman Empire, from the then Greek-speaking Anatolia, now modern day Turkey, and is venerated as a Christian martyr.

Saint George is one of the most venerated saints in the Eastern Orthodox Church and Oriental Orthodox Churches. He is immortalised in the tale of George and the Dragon and is one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers.

St. George is the patron saint of Aragon, Canada, Catalonia, China, England, Ethiopia, Georgia, Greece, Montenegro, Palestine, Portugal, Russia, and Serbia, as well as the cities of Amersfoort, Beirut, Ferrara, Freiburg, Genoa, Ljubljana, and Moscow, as well as a wide range of professions, organisations and disease sufferers.